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COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

IN MEMORIAM

John Swett

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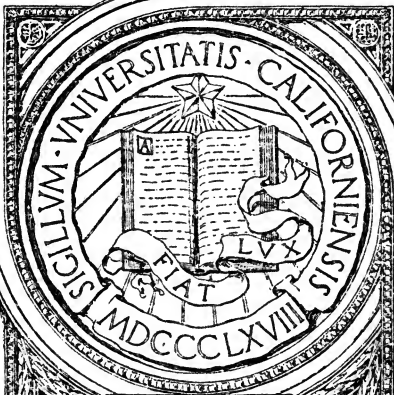
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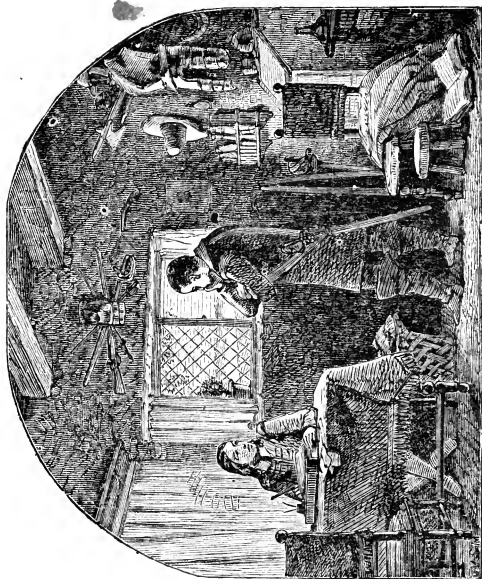


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THE

*Courtship of Miles
Standish.*

BY

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

Illustrated.



BOSTON:

JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY,
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THE
COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH.

I.

MILES STANDISH.

IN the Old Colony days, in Plymouth
the land of the Pilgrims,
To and fro in a room of his simple
and primitive dwelling,
Clad in doublet and hose, and boots of Cordo-
van leather,
Strode, with a martial air, Miles Standish the
Puritan Captain.
Buried in thought he seemed, with his hands
behind him, and pausing
Ever and anon to behold his glittering weapons
of warfare,
Hanging in shining array along the walls of
the chamber, —

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Cutlass and corselet of steel, and his trusty
sword of Damascus,

Curved at the point and inscribed with its mystical Arabic sentence,

While underneath, in a corner, were fowling-piece, musket, and matchlock.

Short of stature he was, but strongly built and athletic,

Broad in the shoulders, deep-chested, with muscles and sinews of iron;

Brown as a nut was his face, but his russet beard was already

Flaked with patches of snow, as hedges sometimes in November.

Near him was seated John Alden, his friend, and household companion,

Writing with diligent speed at a table of pine by the window;

Fair-haired, azure-eyed, with delicate Saxon complexion,

Having the dew of his youth, and the beauty thereof, as the captives

Whom Saint Gregory saw, and exclaimed,
“Not Angles, but Angels.”

Youngest of all was he of the men who came in the May Flower.

Suddenly breaking the silence, the diligent scribe interrupting,

Spake, in the pride of his heart, Miles Standish
the Captain of Plymouth.

“Look at these arms,” he said, “the warlike
weapons that hang here

Burnished and bright and clean, as if for pa-
rade or inspection !

This is the sword of Damascus I fought with
in Flanders ; this breastplate,

Well I remember the day ! once saved my life
in a skirmish ;

Here in front you can see the very dint of the
bullet

Fired point-blank at my heart by a Spanish
arcabucero.

Had it not been of sheer steel, the forgotten
bones of Miles Standish

Would at this moment be mould, in their grave
in the Flemish morasses.”

Thereupon answered John Alden, but looked
not up from his writing :

“Truly the breath of the Lord hath slackened
the speed of the bullet ;

He in his mercy preserved you, to be our
shield and our weapon !”

Still the Captain continued, unheeding the
words of the stripling :

“See, how bright they are burnished, as if in
an arsenal hanging ;

10 THE COURTHIP OF MILES STANDISH.

That is because I have done it myself, and not
left it to others.

Serve yourself, would you be well served, is
an excellent adage ;

So I take care of my arms, as you of your pens
and your inkhorn.

Then, too, there are my soldiers, my great,
invincible army,

Twelve men, all equipped, having each his rest
and his matchlock,

Eighteen shillings a month, together with diet
and pillage,

And, like Cæsar, I know the name of each of
my soldiers ! ”

This he said with a smile, that danced in his
eyes, as the sunbeams

Dance on the waves of the sea, and vanish
again in a moment.

Alden laughed as he wrote, and still the Cap-
tain continued :

“ Look ! you can see from this window my
brazen howitzer planted

High on the roof of the church, a preacher
who speaks to the purpose,

Steady, straightforward, and strong, with irre-
sistible logic,

Orthodox, flashing conviction right into the
hearts of the heathen.

Now we are ready, I think, for any assault of
the Indians ;
Let them come, if they like, and the sooner
they try it the better, —
Let them come if they like, be it sagamore,
sachem, or pow-wow,
Aspinet, Samoset, Corbitant, Squanto, or To-
kamahamon ! ”

Long at the window he stood, and wistfully
gazed on the landscape,
Washed with a cold gray mist, the vapory
breath of the east-wind,
Forest and meadow and hill, and the steel-blue
rim of the ocean,
Lying silent and sad, in the afternoon shadows
and sunshine.
Over his countenance flitted a shadow like
those on the landscape,
Gloom intermingled with light ; and his voice
was subdued with emotion,
Tenderness, pity, regret, as after a pause he
proceeded :
“ Yonder there, on the hill by the sea, lies
buried Rose Standish ;
Beautiful rose of love, that bloomed for me by
the wayside !
She was the first to die of all who came in the
May Flower !

12 THE COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH.

Green above her is growing the field of wheat
we have sown there.

Better to hide from the Indian scouts the
graves of our people,

Lest they should count them and see how many
already have perished ! ”

Sadly his face he averted, and strode up and
down, and was thoughtful.

Fixed to the opposite wall was a shelf of
books, and among them

Prominent three, distinguished alike for bulk
and for binding ;

Bariffe's Artillery Guide, and the Commenta-
ries of Cæsar

Out of the Latin translated by Arthur Goldinge
of London,

And, as if guarded by these, between them was
standing the Bible.

Musing a moment before them, Miles Standish
paused, as if doubtful

Which of the three he should choose for his
consolation and comfort,

Whether the wars of the Hebrews, the famous
campaigns of the Romans,

Or the Artillery practice, designed for belliger-
ent Christians.

Finally down from its shelf he dragged the
ponderous Roman,

Seated himself at the window, and opened the
book, and in silence
Turned o'er the well-worn leaves, where thumb-
marks thick on the margin,
Like the trample of feet, proclaimed the battle
was hottest.
Nothing was heard in the room but the hurry-
ing pen of the stripling,
Busily writing epistles important, to go by the
May Flower,
Ready to sail on the morrow, or next day at
latest, God willing!
Homeward bound with the tidings of all that
terrible winter,
Letters written by Alden, and full of the name
of Priscilla,
Full of the name and the fame of the Puritan
maiden Priscilla!

II.

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP.

Nothing was heard in the room but the hur-
rying pen of the stripling,
Or an occasional sigh from the laboring heart
of the Captain,
Reading the marvellous words and achieve-
ments of Julius Cæsar.

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After a while he exclaimed, as he smote with
his hand, palm downwards,
Heavily on the page: "A wonderful man was
this Cæsar!

You are a writer, and I am a fighter, but here
is a fellow

Who could both write and fight, and in both
was equally skilful!"

Straightway answered and spake John Alden,
the comely, the youthful:

"Yes, he was equally skilled, as you say, with
his pen and his weapons.

Somewhere have I read, but where I forget,
he could dictate

Seven letters at once, at the same time writing
his memoirs."

"Truly," continued the Captain, not heeding
or hearing the other, —

"Truly a wonderful man was Caius Julius
Cæsar!

Better be first, he said, in a little Iberian village,
Than be second in Rome, and I think he was
right when he said it.

Twice was he married before he was twenty,
and many times after;

Battles five hundred he fought, and a thousand
cities he conquered;

He, too, fought in Flanders, as he himself has
recorded;

Finally he was stabbed by his friend, the orator Brutus!

Now, do you know what he did on a certain occasion in Flanders,

When the rear-guard of his army retreated,
the front giving way too,

And the immortal Twelfth Legion was crowded
so closely together

There was no room for their swords? Why,
he seized a shield from a soldier,

Put himself straight at the head of his troops,
and commanded the captains,

Calling on each by his name, to order forward
the ensigns;

Then to widen the ranks, and give more room
for their weapons;

So he won the day, the battle of something-or-other.

That's what I always say; if you wish a thing
to be well done,

You must do it yourself, you must not leave it
to others!"

All was silent again; the Captain continued
his reading.

Nothing was heard in the room but the hurrying
pen of the stripling

Writing epistles important to go next day by
the May Flower,

Filled with the name and the fame of the
Puritan maiden Priscilla;
Every sentence began or closed with the
name of Priscilla,
Till the treacherous pen, to which he confided
the secret,
Strove to betray it by singing and shouting the
name of Priscilla!
Finally closing his book, with a bang of the
ponderous cover,
Sudden and loud as the sound of a soldier
grounding his musket,
Thus to the young man spake Miles Standish
the Captain of Plymouth:
“When you have finished your work, I have
something important to tell you.
Be not however in haste; I can wait; I shall
not be impatient!”
Straightway Alden replied, as he folded the last
of his letters,
Pushing his papers aside, and giving respect-
ful attention:
“Speak; for whenever you speak, I am always
ready to listen,
Always ready to hear whatever pertains to
Miles Standish.”
Thereupon answered the Captain, embarrassed,
and culling his phrases:

“ 'T is not good for a man to be alone, say the Scriptures.

This I have said before, and again and again I repeat it ;

Every hour in the day, I think it, and feel it, and say it.

Since Rose Standish died, my life has been weary and dreary,

Sick at heart have I been, beyond the healing of friendship.

Oft in my lonely hours have I thought of the maiden Priscilla.

She is alone in the world ; her father and mother and brother

Died in the winter together ; I saw her going and coming,

Now to the grave of the dead, and now to the bed of the dying,

Patient, courageous, and strong, and said to myself, that if ever

There were angels on earth, as there are angels in heaven,

Two have I seen and known ; and the angel whose name is Priscilla

Holds in my desolate life the place which the other abandoned.

Long have I cherished the thought, but never have dared to reveal it,

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Being a coward in this, though valiant enough
for the most part.

Go to the damsel Priscilla, the loveliest maiden
of Plymouth,

Say that a blunt old Captain, a man not of
words but of actions,

Offers his hand and his heart, the hand and
heart of a soldier.

Not in these words, you know, but this in short
is my meaning ;

I am a maker of war, and not a maker of phrases.

You, who are bred as a scholar, can say it in
elegant language,

Such as you read in your books of the pleadings
and wooings of lovers,

Such as you think best adapted to win the heart
of a maiden."

When he had spoken, John Alden, the fair-
haired, taciturn stripling,

All aghast at his words, surprised, embarrassed,
bewildered,

Trying to mask his dismay by treating the sub-
ject with lightness,

Trying to smile, and yet feeling his heart stand
still in his bosom,

Just as a timepiece stops in a house that is
stricken by lightning,

Thus made answer and spake, or rather stammered than answered :

“Such a message as that, I am sure I should mangle and mar it ;

If you would have it well done, — I am only repeating your maxim, —

You must do it yourself, you must not leave it to others ! ”

But with the air of a man whom nothing can turn from his purpose,

Gravely shaking his head, made answer the Captain of Plymouth :

“Truly the maxim is good, and I do not mean to gainsay it ;

But we must use it discreetly, and not waste powder for nothing.

Now, as I said before, I was never a maker of phrases.

I can march up to a fortress and summon the place to surrender,

But march up to a woman with such a proposal, I dare not.

I'm not afraid of bullets, nor shot from the mouth of a cannon,

But of a thundering ‘No !’ point-blank from the mouth of a woman,

That I confess I'm afraid of, nor am I ashamed to confess it !

So you must grant my request, for you are an
elegant scholar,

Having the graces of speech, and skill in the
turning of phrases."

Taking the hand of his friend, who still was
reluctant and doubtful,

Holding it long in his own, and pressing it
kindly, he added :

"Though I have spoken thus lightly, yet deep
is the feeling that prompts me ;

Surely you cannot refuse what I ask in the
name of our friendship ! "

Then made answer John Alden : "The name
of friendship is sacred ;

What you demand in that name, I have not the
power to deny you ! "

So the strong will prevailed, subduing and
moulding the gentler,

Friendship prevailed over love, and Alden went
on his errand.

III.

THE LOVER'S ERRAND.

So the strong will prevailed, and Alden went on
his errand,

Out of the street of the village, and into the
paths of the forest,





Into the tranquil woods, where bluebirds and
robins were building
Towns in the populous trees, with hanging
gardens of verdure,
Peaceful, aerial cities of joy and affection and
freedom.

All around him was calm, but within him com-
motion and conflict,

Love contending with friendship, and self with
each generous impulse.

To and fro in his breast his thoughts were
heaving and dashing,

As in a foundering ship, with every roll of the
vessel,

Washes the bitter sea, the merciless surge of
the ocean!

“Must I relinquish it all,” he cried with a wild
lamentation, —

“Must I relinquish it all, the joy, the hope, the
illusion?

Was it for this I have loved, and waited, and
worshipped in silence?

Was it for this I have followed the flying feet
and the shadow

Over the wintry sea, to the desolate shores of
New England?

Truly the heart is deceitful, and out of its depths
of corruption

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Rise, like an exhalation, the misty phantoms
of passion ;
Angels of light they seem, but are only delu-
sions of Satan.

All is clear to me now ; I feel it, I see it dis-
tinctly !

This is the hand of the Lord ; it is laid upon
me in anger,

For I have followed too much the heart's de-
sires and devices,

Worshipping Astaroth blindly, and impious
idols of Baal.

This is the cross I must bear ; the sin and the
swift retribution."

So through the Plymouth woods John Alden
went on his errand ;

Crossing the brook at the ford, where it brawled
over pebble and shallow,

Gathering still, as he went, the May-flowers
blooming around him,

Fragrant, filling the air with a strange and
wonderful sweetness,

Children lost in the woods, and covered with
leaves in their slumber.

"Puritan flowers," he said, "and the type of
Puritan maidens,

Modest and simple and sweet, the very type of
Priscilla !

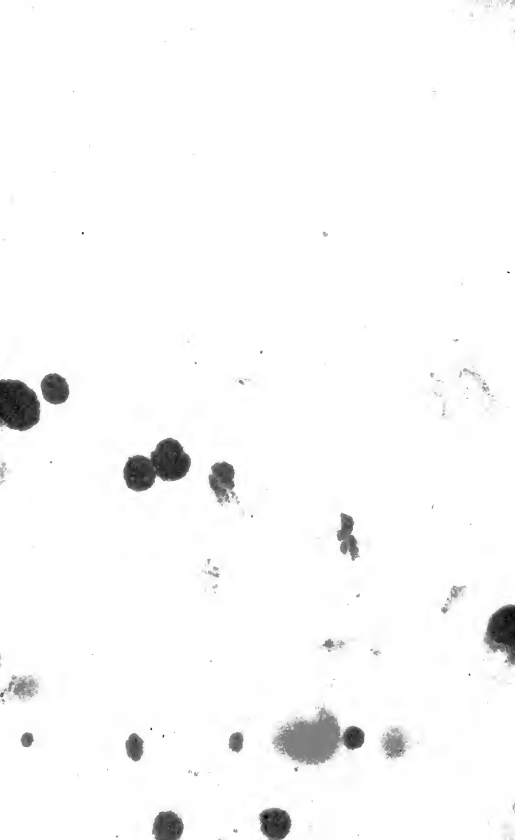
So I will take them to her; to Priscilla the
 May-flower of Plymouth,
Modest and simple and sweet, as a parting gift
 will I take them;
Breathing their silent farewells, as they fade
 and wither and perish,
Soon to be thrown away as is the heart of the
 giver."

So through the Plymouth woods John Alden
 went on his errand;
Came to an open space, and saw the disk of
 the ocean,
Sailless, sombre and cold with the comfortless
 breath of the east-wind;
Saw the new-built house, and people at work
 in a meadow;
Heard, as he drew near the door, the musical
 voice of Priscilla
Singing the hundredth Psalm, the grand old
 Puritan anthem,
Music that Luther sang to the sacred words of
 the Psalmist,
Full of the breath of the Lord, consoling and
 comforting many.
Then, as he opened the door, he beheld the
 form of the maiden
Seated beside her wheel, and the carded wool
 like a snow-drift

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Piled at her knee, her white hands feeding the
 ravenous spindle,
While with her foot on the treadle she guided
 the wheel in its motion.
Open wide on her lap lay the well-worn psalm-
 book of Ainsworth,
Printed in Amsterdam, the words and the music
 together,
Rough-hewn, angular notes, like stones in the
 wall of a churchyard,
Darkened and overhung by the running vine of
 the verses.
Such was the book from whose pages she sang
 the old Puritan anthem,
She, the Puritan girl, in the solitude of the
 forest,
Making the humble house and the modest ap-
 parel of homespun
Beautiful with her beauty, and rich with the
 wealth of her being !
Over him rushed, like a wind that is keen and
 cold and relentless,
Thoughts of what might have been, and the
 weight and woe of his errand ;
All the dreams that had faded, and all the hopes
 that had vanished,
All his life henceforth a dreary and tenantless
 mansion,



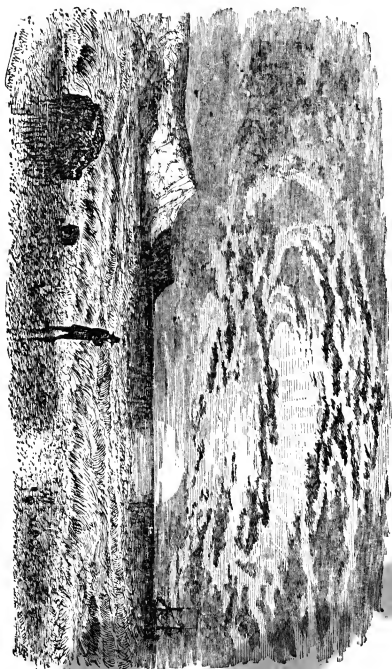


Blowing o'er rocky wastes, and the grottos and
gardens of ocean !
Lay thy cold, moist hand on my burning fore-
head, and wrap me
Close in thy garments of mist, to allay the fever
within me ! ”

Like an awakened conscience, the sea was
moaning and tossing,
Beating remorseful and loud the mutable sands
of the sea-shore.
Fierce in his soul was the struggle and tumult
of passions contending ;
Love triumphant and crowned, and friendship
wounded and bleeding, —
Passionate cries of desire, and importunate
pleadings of duty !
“ Is it my fault,” he said, “ that the maiden has
chosen between us ?
Is it my fault that he failed, — my fault that I
am the victor ? ”
Then within him there thundered a voice, like
the voice of the Prophet :
“ It hath displeased the Lord ! ” — and he
thought of David's transgression,
Bathsheba's beautiful face, and his friend in the
front of the battle !

Shame and confusion of guilt, and abasement
 and self-condemnation,
 Overwhelmed him at once ; and he cried in the
 deepest contrition :
 “ It hath displeased the Lord ! It is the temp-
 tation of Satan ! ”

Then, uplifting his head, he looked at the sea,
 and beheld there
 Dimly the shadowy form of the May Flower
 riding at anchor,
 Rocked on the rising tide, and ready to sail on
 the morrow ;
 Heard the voices of men through the mist, the
 rattle of cordage
 Thrown on the deck, the shouts of the mate,
 and the sailors’ “ Ay, ay, Sir ! ”
 Clear and distinct, but not loud, in the drip-
 ping air of the twilight.
 Still for a moment he stood, and listened, and
 stared at the vessel,
 Then went hurriedly on, as one who, seeing a
 phantom,
 Stops, then quickens his pace, and follows the
 beckoning shadow.
 “ Yes, it is plain to me now,” he murmured ;
 “ the hand of the Lord is
 Leading me out of the land of darkness, the
 bondage of error,





Through the sea, that shall lift the walls of
its waters around me,
Hiding me, cutting me off, from the cruel
thoughts that pursue me.
Back will I go o'er the ocean, this dreary land
will abandon,
Her whom I may not love, and him whom my
heart has offended.
Better to be in my grave in the green old
churchyard in England,
Close by my mother's side, and among the
dust of my kindred ;
Better be dead and forgotten, than living in
shame and dishonor !
(Sacred and safe and unseen, in the dark of the
narrow chamber
With me my secret shall lie, like a buried jewel
that glimmers
Bright on the hand that is dust, in the chambers
of silence and darkness, —
Yes, as the marriage ring of the great espousal
hereafter ! ”

Thus as he spake he turned, in the strength
of his strong resolution,
Leaving behind him the shore, and hurried
along in the twilight,
Through the congenial gloom of the forest
silent and sombre,

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Till he beheld the lights in the seven houses of
Plymouth,

Shining like seven stars in the dusk and mist
of the evening.

Soon he entered his door, and found the re-
doubtable Captain

Sitting alone, and absorbed in the martial pages
of Cæsar,

Fighting some great campaign in Hainault or
Brabant or Flanders.

“Long have you been on your errand,” he said
with a cheery demeanor,

Even as one who is waiting an answer, and
fears not the issue.

“Not far off is the house, although the woods
are between us ;

But you have lingered so long, that while you
were going and coming

I have fought ten battles and sacked and de-
molished a city.

Come, sit down, and in order relate to me all
that has happened.”

Then John Alden spake, and related the
wondrous adventure,

From beginning to end, minutely, just as it
happened ;

How he had seen Priscilla, and how he had sped
in his courtship,

Only smoothing a little, and softening down
her refusal.

But when he came at length to the words
Priscilla had spoken,

Words so tender and cruel: "Why don't you
speak for yourself, John?"

Up leaped the Captain of Plymouth, and stamped
on the floor, till his armor

Clanged on the wall, where it hung, with a
sound of sinister omen.

All his pent-up wrath burst forth in a sudden
explosion,

E'en as a hand-grenade, that scatters destruc-
tion around it.

Wildly he shouted and loud: "John Alden!
you have betrayed me!

Me, Miles Standish, your friend! have sup-
planted, defrauded, betrayed me!

One of my ancestors ran his sword through the
heart of Wat Tyler;

Who shall prevent me from running my own
through the heart of a traitor?

Yours is the greater treason, for yours is a
treason to friendship!

You, who lived under my roof, whom I cher-
ished and loved as a brother;

You, who have fed at my board, and drunk at
my cup, to whose keeping

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I have intrusted my honor, my thoughts the
most sacred and secret,—
You too, Brutus! ah woe to the name of
friendship hereafter!
Brutus was Cæsar's friend, and you were mine,
but henceforward
Let there be nothing between us save war, and
implacable hatred!"

So spake the Captain of Plymouth, and strode
about in the chamber,
Chafing and choking with rage; like cords were
the veins on his temples.
But in the midst of his anger a man appeared
at the doorway,
Bringing in uttermost haste a message of urgent
importance,
Rumors of danger and war and hostile incur-
sions of Indians!
Straightway the Captain paused, and, without
further question or parley,
Took from the nail on the wall his sword with
its scabbard of iron,
Buckled the belt round his waist, and, frowning
fiercely, departed.
Alden was left alone. He heard the clank of
the scabbard
Growing fainter and fainter, and dying away in
the distance.

Is it to shoot red squirrels you have your how-
itzer planted

There on the roof of the church, or is it to
shoot red devils?

Truly the only tongue that is understood by a
savage

Must be the tongue of fire that speaks from the
mouth of the cannon!"

Thereupon answered and said the excellent
Elder of Plymouth,

Somewhat amazed and alarmed at this irrever-
ent language:

"Not so thought Saint Paul, nor yet the other
Apostles;

Not from the cannon's mouth were the tongues
of fire they spake with!"

But unheeded fell this mild rebuke on the
Captain,

Who had advanced to the table, and thus con-
tinued discoursing:

"Leave this matter to me, for to me by right
it pertaineth.

War is a terrible trade; but in the cause that
is righteous,

Sweet is the smell of powder; and thus I an-
swer the challenge!"

Then from the rattlesnake's skin, with a
sudden, contemptuous gesture,

Jerking the Indian arrows, he filled it with
 powder and bullets
 Full to the very jaws, and handed it back to the
 savage,
 Saying, in thundering tones: "Here, take it!
 this is your answer!"
 Silently out of the room then glided the glis-
 tening savage,
 Bearing the serpent's skin, and seeming him-
 self like a serpent,
 Winding his sinuous way in the dark to the
 depths of the forest.

V.

THE SAILING OF THE MAY FLOWER.

JUST in the gray of the dawn, as the mists up-
 rose from the meadows,
 There was a stir and a sound in the slumbering
 village of Plymouth;
 Clanging and clicking of arms, and the order
 imperative, "Forward!"
 Given in tone suppressed, a tramp of feet, and
 then silence.
 Figures ten, in the mist, marched slowly out of
 the village.
 Standish the stalwart it was, with eight of his
 valorous army,

Led by their Indian guide, by Hobomok, friend
of the white men,
Northward marching to quell the sudden revolt
of the savage.
Giants they seemed in the mist, or the mighty
men of King David;
Giants in heart they were, who believed in God
and the Bible, —
Ay, who believed in the smiting of Midianites
and Philistines.
Over them gleamed far off the crimson banners
of morning;
Under them loud on the sands, the serried bil-
lows, advancing,
Fired along the line, and in regular order re-
treated.

Many a mile had they marched, when at
length the village of Plymouth
Woke from its sleep, and arose, intent on its
manifold labors.
Sweet was the air and soft; and slowly the
smoke from the chimneys
Rose over roofs of thatch, and pointed steadily
eastward;
Men came forth from the doors, and paused
and talked of the weather,
Said that the wind had changed, and was blow-
ing fair for the May Flower;

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Talked of their Captain's departure, and all the
 dangers that menaced,
He being gone, the town, and what should be
 done in his absence.
Merrily sang the birds, and the tender voices
 of women
Consecrated with hymns the common cares of
 the household.
Out of the sea rose the sun, and the billows
 rejoiced at his coming ;
Beautiful were his feet on the purple tops of
 the mountains ;
Beautiful on the sails of the May Flower riding
 at anchor,
Battered and blackened and worn by all the
 storms of the winter.
Loosely against her masts was hanging and
 flapping her canvas,
Rent by so many gales, and patched by the
 hands of the sailors.
Suddenly from her side, as the sun rose over
 the ocean,
Darted a puff of smoke, and floated seaward ;
 anon rang
Loud over field and forest the cannon's roar,
 and the echoes
Heard and repeated the sound, the signal-gun
 of departure !

Ah ! but with louder echoes replied the hearts
of the people !

Meekly, in voices subdued, the chapter was
read from the Bible,

Meekly the prayer was begun, but ended in
fervent entreaty !

Then from their houses in haste came forth the
Pilgrims of Plymouth,

Men and women and children, all hurrying
down to the sea-shore,

Eager, with tearful eyes, to say farewell to the
May Flower,

Homeward bound o'er the sea, and leaving
them here in the desert.

Foremost among them was Alden. All night
he had lain without slumber,

Turning and tossing about in the heat and un-
rest of his fever.

He had beheld Miles Standish, who came back
late from the council,

Stalking into the room, and heard him mutter
and murmur,

Sometimes it seemed a prayer, and sometimes
it sounded like swearing.

Once he had come to the bed, and stood there
a moment in silence ;

Then he turned away, and said : " I will not
awake him ;

Let him sleep on, it is best ; for what is the
use of more talking ! ”

Then he extinguished the light, and threw him-
self down on his pallet,

Dressed as he was, and ready to start at the
break of the morning, —

Covered himself with the cloak he had worn in
his campaigns in Flanders, —

Slept as a soldier sleeps in his bivouac, ready
for action.

But with the dawn he arose ; in the twilight
Alden beheld him

Put on his corselet of steel, and all the rest of
his armor,

Buckle about his waist his trusty blade of Da-
mascus,

Take from the corner his musket, and so stride
out of the chamber.

Often the heart of the youth had burned and
yearned to embrace him,

Often his lips had essayed to speak, imploring
for pardon ;

All the old friendship came back, with its ten-
der and grateful emotions ;

But his pride overmastered the nobler nature
within him, —

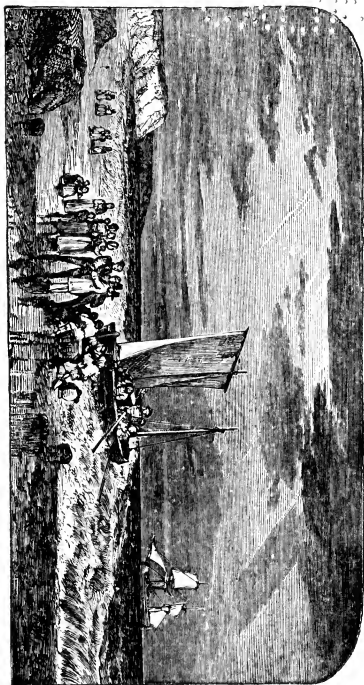
Pride, and the sense of his wrong, and the
burning fire of the insult.

So he beheld his friend departing in anger, but
 spake not,
Saw him go forth to danger, perhaps to death,
 and he spake not !
Then he arose from his bed, and heard what
 the people were saying,
Joined in the talk at the door, with Stephen
 and Richard and Gilbert,
Joined in the morning prayer, and in the read-
 ing of Scripture,
And, with the others, in haste went hurrying
 down to the sea-shore,
Down to the Plymouth Rock, that had been to
 their feet as a doorstep
Into a world unknown, — the corner-stone of
 a nation !

There with his boat was the Master, already
 a little impatient
Lest he should lose the tide, or the wind might
 shift to the eastward,
Square-built, hearty, and strong, with an odor
 of ocean about him,
Speaking with this one and that, and cram-
 ming letters and parcels
Into his pockets capacious, and messages min-
 gled together
Into his narrow brain, till at last he was
 wholly bewildered.

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Nearer the boat stood Alden, with one foot
placed on the gunwale,
One still firm on the rock, and talking at times
with the sailors,
Seated erect on the thwarts, all ready and eager
for starting.
He too was eager to go, and thus put an end
to his anguish,
Thinking to fly from despair, that swifter than
keel is or canvas,
Thinking to drown in the sea the ghost that
would rise and pursue him.
But as he gazed on the crowd, he beheld the
form of Priscilla
Standing dejected among them, unconscious of
all that was passing.
Fixed were her eyes upon his, as if she divined
his intention,
Fixed with a look so sad, so reproachful, im-
ploring, and patient,
That with a sudden revulsion his heart recoiled
from its purpose,
As from the verge of a crag, where one step
more is destruction.
Strange is the heart of man, with its quick,
mysterious instincts!
Strange is the life of man, and fatal or fated
are moments,





Whereupon turn, as on hinges, the gates of the
wall adamantine !

“ Here I remain ! ” he exclaimed, as he looked
at the heavens above him,

Thanking the Lord whose breath had scattered
the mist and the madness,

Wherein, blind and lost, to death he was stag-
gering headlong.

“ Yonder snow-white cloud, that floats in the
ether above me,

Seems like a hand that is pointing and beckon-
ing over the ocean.

There is another hand, that is not so spectral
and ghost-like,

Holding me, drawing me back, and clasping
mine for protection.

Float, O hand of cloud, and vanish away in the
ether !

Roll thyself up like a fist, to threaten and
daunt me ; I heed not

Either your warning or menace, or any omen
of evil !

There is no land so sacred, no air so pure and
so wholesome,

As is the air she breathes, and the soil that is
pressed by her footsteps.

Here for her sake will I stay, and like an
invisible presence

Hover around her forever, protecting, supporting
her weakness ;

Yes ! as my foot was the first that stepped on
this rock at the landing,

So, with the blessing of God, shall it be the
last at the leaving ! ”

Meanwhile the Master alert, but with dignified
air and important,
Scanning with watchful eye the tide and the
wind and the weather,

Walked about on the sands, and the people
crowded around him

Saying a few last words, and enforcing his
careful remembrance.

Then, taking each by the hand, as if he were
grasping a tiller,

Into the boat he sprang, and in haste shoved
off to his vessel,

Glad in his heart to get rid of all this worry
and flurry,

Glad to be gone from a land of sand and sickness
and sorrow,

Short allowance of victual, and plenty of nothing
but Gospel !

Lost in the sound of the oars was the last farewell
of the Pilgrims.

O strong hearts and true ! not one went back
in the May Flower !

No, not one looked back, who had set his hand
to this ploughing !

Soon were heard on board the shouts and
songs of the sailors
Heaving the windlass round, and hoisting the
ponderous anchor.
Then the yards were braced, and all sails set
to the west-wind,
Blowing steady and strong ; and the May
Flower sailed from the harbor,
Rounded the point of the Gurnet, and leaving
far to the southward
Island and cape of sand, and the Field of the
First Encounter,
Took the wind on her quarter, and stood for
the open Atlantic,
Borne on the send of the sea, and the swelling
hearts of the Pilgrims.

Long in silence they watched the receding
sail of the vessel,
Much endeared to them all, as something living
and human ;
Then, as if filled with the spirit, and wrapt in
a vision prophetic,
Baring his hoary head, the excellent Elder of
Plymouth

Said, "Let us pray!" and they prayed, and
thanked the Lord and took courage.
Mournfully sobbed the waves at the base of
the rock, and above them
Bowed and whispered the wheat on the hill of
death, and their kindred
Seemed to awake in their graves, and to join
in the prayer that they uttered.
Sun-illumined and white, on the eastern verge
of the ocean
Gleamed the departing sail, like a marble slab
in a graveyard;
Buried beneath it lay forever all hope of escap-
ing.
Lo! as they turned to depart, they saw the
form of an Indian,
Watching them from the hill; but while they
spake with each other,
Pointing with outstretched hands, and saying,
"Look!" he had vanished.
So they returned to their homes; but Alden
lingered a little,
Musing alone on the shore, and watching the
wash of the billows
Round the base of the rock, and the sparkle
and flash of the sunshine,
Like the spirit of God, moving visibly over the
waters.

VI.

PRISCILLA.

THUS for a while he stood, and mused by the
shore of the ocean,
Thinking of many things, and most of all of
Priscilla ;
And as if thought had the power to draw to
itself, like the loadstone,
Whatsoever it touches, by subtile laws of its
nature,
Lo ! as he turned to depart, Priscilla was stand-
ing beside him.

“Are you so much offended, you will not
speak to me ?” said she.
“Am I so much to blame, that yesterday, when
you were pleading
Warmly the cause of another, my heart, im-
pulsive and wayward,
Pleaded your own, and spake out, forgetful
perhaps of decorum ?
Certainly you can forgive me for speaking so
frankly, for saying
What I ought not to have said, yet now I can
never unsay it ;
For there are moments in life, when the heart
is so full of emotion,

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That if by chance it be shaken, or into its
depths like a pebble

Drops some careless word, it overflows, and
its secret,

Spilt on the ground like water, can never be
gathered together.

Yesterday I was shocked, when I heard you
speak of Miles Standish,

Praising his virtues, transforming his very
defects into virtues,

Praising his courage and strength, and even
his fighting in Flanders,

As if by fighting alone you could win the heart
of a woman,

Quite overlooking yourself and the rest, in
exalting your hero.

Therefore I spake as I did, by an irresistible
impulse.

You will forgive me, I hope, for the sake of
the friendship between us,

Which is too true and too sacred to be so easily
broken ! ”

Thereupon answered John Alden, the scholar,
the friend of Miles Standish :

“ I was not angry with you, with myself alone
I was angry,

Seeing how badly I managed the matter I had
in my keeping.”





“No !” interrupted the maiden, with answer
prompt and decisive, —

“No ; you were angry with me, for speaking
so frankly and freely.

It was wrong, I acknowledge ; for it is the fate
of a woman

Long to be patient and silent, to wait like a
ghost that is speechless,

Till some questioning voice dissolves the spell
of its silence.

Hence is the inner life of so many suffering
women

Sunless and silent and deep, like subterranean
rivers

Running through caverns of darkness, unheard,
unseen, and unfruitful,

Chafing their channels of stone, with endless
and profitless murmurs.”

Thereupon answered John Alden, the young
man, the lover of women :

“Heaven forbid it, Priscilla ; and truly they
seem to me always

More like the beautiful rivers that watered the
garden of Eden,

More like the river Euphrates, through deserts
of Havilah flowing,

Filling the land with delight, and memories
sweet of the garden !”

“ Ah, by these words, I can see,” again interrupted the maiden,

“ How very little you prize me, or care for what I am saying.

When from the depths of my heart, in pain and with secret misgiving,

Frankly I speak to you, asking for sympathy only and kindness,

Straightway you take up my words, that are plain and direct and in earnest,

Turn them away from their meaning, and answer with flattering phrases.

This is not right, is not just, is not true to the best that is in you ;

For I know and esteem you, and feel that your nature is noble,

Lifting mine up to a higher, a more ethereal level.

Therefore I value your friendship, and feel it perhaps the more keenly

If you say aught that implies I am only as one among many,

If you make use of those common and complimentary phrases

Most men think so fine, in dealing and speaking with women,

But which women reject as insipid, if not as insulting.”

Mute and amazed was Alden ; and listened
and looked at Priscilla,
Thinking he never had seen her more fair,
more divine in her beauty.
He who but yesterday pleaded so glibly the
cause of another,
Stood there embarrassed and silent, and seek-
ing in vain for an answer.
So the maiden went on, and little divined or
imagined
What was at work in his heart, that made him
so awkward and speechless.
“ Let us, then, be what we are, and speak
what we think, and in all things
Keep ourselves loyal to truth, and the sacred
professions of friendship.
It is no secret I tell you, nor am I ashamed to
declare it :
I have liked to be with you, to see you, to
speak with you always.
So I was hurt at your words, and a little
affronted to hear you
Urge me to marry your friend, though he were
the Captain Miles Standish.
For I must tell you the truth : much more to
me is your friendship
Than all the love he could give, were he twice
the hero you think him.”

Then she extended her hand, and Alden, who
 eagerly grasped it,
 Felt all the wounds in his heart, that were
 aching and bleeding so sorely,
 Healed by the touch of that hand, and he said,
 with a voice full of feeling :

“ Yes, we must ever be friends ; and of all who
 offer you friendship
 Let me be ever the first, the truest, the near-
 est and dearest ! ”

Casting a farewell look at the glimmering
 sail of the May Flower,
 Distant, but still in sight, and sinking below
 the horizon,
 Homeward together they walked, with a
 strange, indefinite feeling,
 That all the rest had departed and left them
 alone in the desert.

But, as they went through the fields in the
 blessing and smile of the sunshine,
 Lighter grew their hearts, and Priscilla said
 very archly :

“ Now that our terrible Captain has gone in
 pursuit of the Indians,
 Where he is happier far than he would be com-
 manding a household,
 You may speak boldly, and tell me of all that
 happened between you,

When you returned last night, and said how
ungrateful you found me."

Thereupon answered John Alden, and told her
the whole of the story, —

Told her his own despair, and the direful wrath
of Miles Standish.

Whereat the maiden smiled, and said between
laughing and earnest,

"He is a little chimney, and heated hot in a
moment!"

But as he gently rebuked her, and told her how
he had suffered, —

How he had even determined to sail that day
in the May Flower,

And had remained for her sake, on hearing the
dangers that threatened, —

All her manner was changed, and she said with
a faltering accent,

"Truly I thank you for this: how good you
have been to me always!"

Thus, as a pilgrim devout, who toward Je-
rusalem journeys,

Taking three steps in advance, and one reluc-
tantly backward,

Urged by importunate zeal, and withheld by
pangs of contrition;

Slowly but steadily onward, receding yet ever
advancing,

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Journeyed this Puritan youth to the Holy
Land of his longings,
Urged by the fervor of love, and withheld by
remorseful misgivings.

VII.

THE MARCH OF MILES STANDISH.

MEANWHILE the stalwart Miles Standish
was marching steadily northward,
Winding through forest and swamp, and along
the trend of the sea-shore,
All day long, with hardly a halt, the fire of his
anger
Burning and crackling within, and the sulphurous odor of powder
Seeming more sweet to his nostrils than all
the scents of the forest.
Silent and moody he went, and much he revolved his discomfort;
He who was used to success, and to easy victories always,
Thus to be flouted, rejected, and laughed to scorn by a maiden,
Thus to be mocked and betrayed by the friend
whom most he had trusted!
Ah! 't was too much to be borne, and he
fretted and chafed in his armor!

“I alone am to blame,” he muttered, “for mine was the folly.

What has a rough old soldier, grown grim and gray in the harness,

Used to the camp and its ways, to do with the wooing of maidens ?

’T was but a dream, — let it pass, — let it vanish like so many others !

What I thought was a flower is only a weed, and is worthless ;

Out of my heart will I pluck it, and throw it away, and henceforward

Be but a fighter of battles, a lover and wooer of dangers ! ”

Thus he revolved in his mind his sorry defeat and discomfort,

While he was marching by day or lying at night in the forest,

Looking up at the trees, and the constellations beyond them.

After a three days’ march he came to an Indian encampment

Pitched on the edge of a meadow, between the sea and the forest ;

Women at work by the tents, and the warriors, horrid with war-paint,

Seated about a fire, and smoking and talking together ;

Who, when they saw from afar the sudden
 approach of the white men,
 Saw the flash of the sun on breastplate and
 sabre and musket,
 Straightway leaped to their feet, and two, from
 among them advancing,
 Came to parley with Standish, and offer him
 furs as a present ;
 Friendship was in their looks, but in their
 hearts there was hatred.
 Braves of the tribe were these, and brothers
 gigantic in stature.
 Huge as Goliath of Gath, or the terrible Og,
 king of Bashan ;
 One was Pecksuot named, and the other was
 called Wattawamat.
 Round their necks were suspended their knives
 in scabbards of wampum,
 Two-edged, trenchant knives, with points as
 sharp as a needle.
 Other arms had they none, for they were cun-
 ning and crafty.
 " Welcome, English ! " they said : these words
 they had learned from the traders
 Touching at times on the coast, to barter and
 chaffer for peltries.
 Then in their native tongue they began to par-
 ley with Standish,

Through his guide and interpreter, Hobomok,
friend of the white man,
Begging for blankets and knives, but mostly
for muskets and powder,
Kept by the white man, they said, concealed,
with the plague, in his cellars,
Ready to be let loose, and destroy his brother
the red man !
But when Standish refused, and said he would
give them the Bible,
Suddenly changing their tone, they began to
boast and to bluster.
Then Wattawamat advanced with a stride in
front of the other,
And, with a lofty demeanor, thus vauntingly
spoke to the Captain :
“ Now Wattawamat can see, by the fiery eyes
of the Captain,
Angry is he in his heart ; but the heart of the
brave Wattawamat
Is not afraid at the sight. He was not born
of a woman,
But on a mountain, at night, from an oak-tree
riven by lightning,
Forth he sprang at a bound, with all his weap-
ons about him,
Shouting, ‘ Who is there here to fight with the
brave Wattawamat ? ’ ”

Then he unsheathed his knife, and, whetting
the blade on his left hand,
Held it aloft and displayed a woman's face on
the handle,
Saying, with bitter expression and look of sinister meaning :
“ I have another at home, with the face of a
man on the handle ;
By and by they shall marry ; and there will be
plenty of children ! ”

Then stood Pecksuot forth, self-vaunting,
insulting Miles Standish :
While with his fingers he patted the knife that
hung at his bosom,
Drawing it half from its sheath, and plunging
it back, as he muttered,
“ By and by it shall see ; it shall eat ; ah, ha !
but shall speak not !
This is the mighty Captain the white men have
sent to destroy us !
He is a little man ; let him go and work with
the women ! ”

Meanwhile Standish had noted the faces and
figures of Indians
Peeping and creeping about from bush to tree
in the forest,

Feigning to look for game, with arrows set on
their bow-strings,
Drawing about him still closer and closer the
net of their ambush.
But undaunted he stood, and dissembled and
treated them smoothly ;
So the old chronicles say, that were writ in the
days of the fathers.
But when he heard their defiance, the boast,
the taunt, and the insult,
All the hot blood of his race, of Sir Hugh and
of Thurston de Standish,
Boiled and beat in his heart, and swelled in the
veins of his temples.
Headlong he leaped on the boaster, and, snatch-
ing his knife from its scabbard,
Plunged it into his heart, and, reeling back-
ward, the savage
Fell with his face to the sky, and a fiendlike
fierceness upon it.
Straight there arose from the forest the awful
sound of the war-whoop,
And, like a flurry of snow on the whistling
wind of December,
Swift and sudden and keen came a flight of
feathery arrows.
Then came a cloud of smoke, and out of the
cloud came the lightning,

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Out of the lightning thunder ; and death un-
seen ran before it.

Frightened the savages fled for shelter in swamp
and in thicket,

Hotly pursued and beset ; but their sachem,
the brave Wattawamat,

Fled not ; he was dead. Unswerving and
swift had a bullet

Passed though his brain, and he fell with both
hands clutching the greensward,

Seeming in death to hold back from his foe the
land of his fathers.

There on the flowers of the meadow the war-
riors lay, and above them,

Silent, with folded arms, stood Hobomok,
friend of the white man.

Smiling at length he exclaimed to the stalwart
Captain of Plymouth :

“Pecksuot bragged very loud, of his courage,
his strength, and his stature, —

Mocked the great Captain, and called him a
little man ; but I see now

Big enough have you been to lay him speech-
less before you !”

Thus the first battle was fought and won by
the stalwart Miles Standish.

When the tidings thereof were brought to the
village of Plymouth,
And as a trophy of war the head of the brave
Wattawamat
Scowled from the roof of the fort, which at
once was a church and a fortress,
All who beheld it rejoiced, and praised the Lord,
and took courage.
Only Priscilla averted her face from this spectre
of terror,
Thanking God in her heart that she had not
married Miles Standish;
Shrinking, fearing almost, lest, coming home
from his battles,
He should lay claim to her hand, as the prize
and reward of his valor.

VIII.

THE SPINNING-WHEEL.

MONTH after month passed away, and in Au-
tumn the ships of the merchants
Came with kindred and friends, with cattle and
corn for the Pilgrims.
All in the village was peace; the men were
intent on their labors,
Busy with hewing and building, with garden-
plot and with merestead,

Busy with breaking the glebe, and mowing the
grass in the meadows,
Searching the sea for its fish, and hunting the
deer in the forest.

All in the village was peace ; but at times the
rumor of warfare

Filled the air with alarm, and the apprehension
of danger.

Bravely the stalwart Standish was scouring the
land with his forces,

Waxing valiant in fight and defeating the alien
armies,

Till his name had become a sound of fear to the
nations.

Anger was still in his heart, but at times the
remorse and contrition

Which in all noble natures succeed the pas-
sionate outbreak,

Came like a rising tide, that encounters the
rush of a river,

Staying its current awhile, but making it bitter
and brackish.

Meanwhile Alden at home had built him a
new habitation,

Solid, substantial, of timber rough-hewn from
the firs of the forest.

Wooden-barred was the door, and the roof was
covered with rushes ;

Latticed the windows were, and the window-
panes were of paper,
Oiled to admit the light, while wind and rain
were excluded.
There too he dug a well, and around it planted
an orchard :
Still may be seen to this day some trace of the
well and the orchard.
Close to the house was the stall, where, safe
and secure from annoyance,
Raghorn, the snow-white bull, that had fallen
to Alden's allotment
In the division of cattle, might ruminatè in the
night-time
Over the pastures he cropped, made fragrant
by sweet pennyroyal.

Oft when his labor was finished, with eager
feet would the dreamer
Follow the pathway that ran through the woods
to the house of Priscilla,
Led by illusions romantic and subtle decep-
tions of fancy,
Pleasure disguised as duty, and love in the
semblance of friendship.
Ever of her he thought, when he fashioned the
walls of his dwelling ;
Ever of her he thought, when he delved in the
soil of his garden ;

Ever of her he thought, when he read in his
Bible on Sunday
Praise of the virtuous woman, as she is de-
scribed in the Proverbs, —
How the heart of her husband doth safely trust
in her always,
How all the days of her life she will do him
good, and not evil,
How she seeketh the wool and the flax and
worketh with gladness,
How she layeth her hand to the spindle and
holdeth the distaff,
How she is not afraid of the snow for herself
or her household,
Knowing her household are clothed with the
scarlet cloth of her weaving!

So as she sat at her wheel one afternoon in
the Autumn,
Alden, who opposite sat, and was watching her
dexterous fingers,
As if the thread she was spinning were that of
his life and his fortune,
After a pause in their talk, thus spake to the
sound of the spindle.
“Truly, Priscilla,” he said, “when I see you
spinning and spinning,
Never idle a moment, but thrifty and thought-
ful of others,



IX.

THE WEDDING-DAY.

FORTH from the curtain of clouds, from the
tent of purple and scarlet

Lo! in the midst of this scene, a breathless
messenger entered,
Bringing in hurry and heat the terrible news
from the village.

Yes; Miles Standish was dead! — an Indian
had brought them the tidings, —

Slain by a poisoned arrow, shot down in the
front of the battle,

Into an ambush beguiled, cut off with the
whole of his forces;

All the town would be burned, and all the
people be murdered!

Such were the tidings of evil that burst on the
hearts of the hearers.

Silent and statue-like stood Priscilla, her face
looking backward

Still at the face of the speaker, her arms up-
lifted in horror;

But John Alden, upstarting, as if the barb of
the arrow

Piercing the heart of his friend had struck his
own, and had sundered

Once and forever the bonds that held him
bound as a captive

Taking each other for husband and wife in the
 Magistrate's presence,
 After the Puritan way, and the laudable cus-
 tom of Holland.
 Fervently then, and devoutly, the excellent
 Elder of Plymouth
 Prayed for the hearth and the home, that were
 founded that day in affection,
 Speaking of life and of death, and imploring
 Divine benedictions.

Lo ! when the service was ended, a form ap-
 peared on the threshold,
 Clad in armor of steel, a sombre and sorrowful
 figure !
 Why does the bridegroom start and stare at
 the strange apparition ?
 Why does the bride turn pale, and hide her
 face on his shoulder ?
 Is it a phantom of air, — a bodiless, spectral
 illusion ?
 Is it a ghost from the grave, that has come to
 forbid the betrothal ?
 Long had it stood there unseen, a guest unin-
 vited, unwelcomed ;
 Over its clouded eyes there had passed at times
 an expression
 Softening the gloom and revealing the warm
 heart hidden beneath them,

As when across the sky the driving rack of the
rain-cloud

Grows for a moment thin, and betrays the sun
by its brightness.

Once it had lifted its hand, and moved its lips,
but was silent,

As if an iron will had mastered the fleeting in-
tention.

But when were ended the troth and the prayer
and the last benediction,

Into the room it strode, and the people beheld
with amazement

Bodily there in his armor Miles Standish the
Captain of Plymouth!

Grasping the bridegroom's hand, he said with
emotion, "Forgive me!

I have been angry and hurt, — too long have
I cherished the feeling;

I have been cruel and hard, but now, thank
God! it is ended.

Mine is the same hot blood that leaped in the
veins of Hugh Standish,

Sensitive, swift to resent, but as swift in aton-
ing for error.

Never so much as now was Miles Standish the
friend of John Alden."

Thereupon answered the bridegroom: "Let
all be forgotten between us, —

All save the dear old friendship, and that shall
grow older and dearer ! ”

Then the Captain advanced, and, bowing, saluted Priscilla,

Gravely, and after the manner of old-fashioned
gentry in England,

Something of camp and of court, of town and
of country, commingled,

Wishing her joy of her wedding, and loudly
lauding her husband.

Then he said with a smile : “ I should have
remembered the adage, —

If you would be well served, you must serve
yourself ; and moreover,

No man can gather cherries in Kent at the
season of Christmas ! ”

Great was the people’s amazement, and
greater yet their rejoicing,

Thus to behold once more the sun-burnt face
of their Captain,

Whom they had mourned as dead ; and they
gathered and crowded about him,

Eager to see him and hear him, forgetful of
bride and of bridegroom,

Questioning, answering, laughing, and each
interrupting the other,

Till the good Captain declared, being quite
overpowered and bewildered,

He had rather by far break into an Indian
encampment,
Than come again to a wedding to which he had
not been invited.

Meanwhile the bridegroom went forth and
stood with the bride at the doorway,
Breathing the perfumed air of that warm and
beautiful morning.
Touched with autumnal tints, but lonely and
sad in the sunshine,
Lay extended before them the land of toil and
privation ;
There were the graves of the dead, and the
barren waste of the sea-shore,
There the familiar fields, the groves of pine,
and the meadows ;
But to their eyes transfigured, it seemed as the
Garden of Eden,
Filled with the presence of God, whose voice
was the sound of the ocean.

Soon was their vision disturbed by the noise
and stir of departure,
Friends coming forth from the house, and im-
patient of longer delaying,
Each with his plan for the day, and the work
that was left uncompleted.

Then from a stall rear, at hand, amid exclama-
 tions of wonder,
 Alden the thoughtful, the careful, so happy, so
 proud of Priscilla,
 Brought out his snow-white bull, obeying the
 hand of its master.
 Led by a cord that was tied to an iron ring in
 its nostrils,
 Covered with crimson cloth, and a cushion
 placed for a saddle.
 She should not walk, he said, through the dust
 and heat of the noonday ;
 Nay, she should ride like a queen, not plod
 along like a peasant.
 Somewhat alarmed at first, but reassured by
 the others,
 Placing her hand on the cushion, her foot in
 the hand of her husband,
 Gayly, with joyous laugh, Priscilla mounted
 her palfrey.
 "Nothing is wanting now," he said with a
 smile, "but the distaff ;
 Then you would be in truth my queen, my
 beautiful Bertha !"

Onward the bridal procession now moved to
 their new habitation,
 Happy husband and wife, and friends convers-
 ing together.





Pleasantly murmured the brook, as they crossed
the ford in the forest,
Pleased with the image that passed, like a dream
of love through its bosom,
Tremulous, floating in air, o'er the depths of
the azure abysses.
Down through the golden leaves the sun was
pouring his splendors,
Gleaming on purple grapes, that, from branches
above them suspended,
Mingled their odorous breath with the balm of
the pine and the fir-tree,
Wild and sweet as the clusters that grew in
the valley of Eschol.
Like a picture it seemed of the primitive, pas-
toral ages,
Fresh with the youth of the world, and recall-
ing Rebecca and Isaac,
Old and yet ever new, and simple and beautiful
always,
Love immortal and young in the endless suc-
cession of lovers.
So through the Plymouth woods passed on-
ward the bridal procession.



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